

Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act Grant Program: FY2007 Request for Proposals

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 9 EPA-R9-CED1-07-001

OVERVIEW

EPA Region 9 is soliciting proposals to carry out the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), and to support efforts by the agricultural community to “transition” away from high-risk pesticides to lower risk pesticides and sustainable practices in food production. The program supports grants for education, extension and demonstration projects for FQPA transition and reduced risk practices for pest management in agriculture.

In 2007, EPA Region 9 anticipates awarding approximately **\$400,000** in grants to eligible applicants. EPA Region 9 anticipates awarding approximately 4 to 6 grants ranging in size from approximately \$50,000 to a maximum of \$100,000.

States, U.S. territories or possessions, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments and intertribal consortia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public and private non-profit institutions, and individuals are eligible to apply for funding. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1955 are not eligible to apply.

Funding Opportunity Title:

Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act Grant Program: FY 2007 Request for Proposals.

Announcement Type: Initial Solicitation for Fiscal Year 2007.

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R9-CED1-07-001

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.716

Statutory Authority:

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, 7 U.S.C. §136r

IMPORTANT DATES

- March 19, 2007: Proposals must be received by 5:00 PM Pacific Standard Time
- April 30, 2007: Funding decisions are announced.
- May 28, 2007: Full application/work plan due to EPA, Region 9
- Sept 30, 2007: Awards made

The above dates (other than the March 19, 2007 proposal submission date) are anticipated dates and may be subject to change. Late proposals will not be considered.

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Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act
Grant Program: FY2007 Request for Proposals
Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R9-CED1-07-001

Full Text Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background and Program Description

The Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), passed by Congress in 1996, establishes health based standards for pesticide residues in raw and processed food. It is intended to protect public health from exposure to pesticides and to create an environment favorable for the development and adoption of lower risk, effective crop protection tools for U.S. agriculture. The EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and numerous agricultural organizations are working on efforts to implement the FQPA. For this effort, EPA established regional programs for FQPA implementation and partnership activities to reduce risks and use of pesticides in agriculture. For more background information on FQPA, visit the EPA website at www.epa.gov/oppfead1/fqpa/.

1. *Purpose and Scope* - The purpose of the Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) Grant Program is to carry out FQPA and support “transition” efforts by growers to more environmentally sound pest management practices. The program supports grants for educational outreach, studies, investigations, and demonstration projects for FQPA transition and reduced risk practices for pest management in agriculture. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that: include a “whole systems” approach by integrating pest, soil, water and crop management practices; address an array of commodities; or that focus on “sustainable” agriculture; and incorporating conservation planning. “Sustainable” agriculture refers to farming practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially responsible. Successful applicants should also have an outreach and extension component to their program. (See Section V. B. Selection Criteria)

2. *Goals and Objectives* - The goals of the national Strategic Agricultural Initiative FQPA grant program are to:

- Utilize demonstration projects, and outreach and education projects to increase the adoption of reduced risk/integrated pest management (IPM) practices that provide alternatives to the use of highly toxic pesticides and/or pesticides impacted negatively by FQPA decisions.
- Encourage partnerships between producers, commodity groups, scientists, extension, local/state/federal government agencies, and other stakeholders to demonstrate, promote, and utilize reduced risk/IPM practices in the field.
- Actively engage scientists, producers, industry, and local/state/federal partners in the specifics of meeting the objectives of FQPA.

- Quantitatively measure and document the effects of using the reduced risk/IPM programs on the environment, human health and community.
- Facilitate a sustainable whole farm systems approach that utilizes conservation planning and reduced risk/IPM practices.
- Demonstrate region-specific pest management practices and integrated crop management systems to replace pesticide uses which may be cancelled under FQPA.

3. *Regional Priorities for 2007* - For 2007, EPA Region 9 is interested in projects that help growers transition away from high risk pesticides to lower risk alternatives. This includes projects that address regional pest issues, and/or air and water quality concerns. Examples of this include:

- Reduce use of organophosphates including azinphos-methyl, Phosmet, Diazinon and chlorpyrifos; carbamates; or synthetic pyrethroid insecticides through transition to lower risk alternatives.
- Transition from high risk pesticides to lower risk practices while also addressing other environmental challenges such as: 1) finding alternatives to soil fumigants and pesticides identified as “Volatile Organic Compounds” contributors, 2) employing pest management practices that also support water quality and food safety efforts, and 3) employing pest management practices that protect endangered species habitat.

Applicants should include economic viability of IPM adoption and supporting data when available. Other challenges to the adoption of sustainable practices should be noted.

B. FQPA/SAI Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan

Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture. These assistance agreements will support EPA Strategic Plan Goal 4 - Healthy Communities and Ecosystems; Objective 4.1 - Chemical, Organism and Pesticide Risk; Program/Project 92 - Field Programs.

C. Environmental Results

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*,” EPA requires that all grant recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature, and in how they are measured.

1. *Outcomes.* The term “outcome” means the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outcomes from the projects funded under this solicitation may include but are not limited to the following: 1) increase the number of growers using reduced risk/IPM tools and techniques; 2) measure quantitative and qualitative reduction in the use of higher risk pesticides or pesticides in general; and 3) support partnerships between crop producers, EPA, other federal/state/local agencies, and other interested stakeholders to implement reduced risk/IPM programs and to leverage funds from other sources to increase the scope of the FQPA/SAI program.

2. *Outputs.* The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal and objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outputs from the projects funded under this solicitation may include but are not limited to the following: 1) educational and outreach materials for growers; 2) conservation plans for growers that include reduced risk pest management; 3) conferences, seminars, and on-site field training on pest management techniques; 4) partnerships established between federal and non-federal programs to provide reduced risk/IPM programs for crop producers; 5) acres impacted by the project under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices; and 6) percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients.

II. Award Information

A. Amount of Funding Available

In 2007, EPA Region 9 anticipates awarding approximately **\$400,000** in grants to eligible applicants. EPA Region 9 anticipates awarding approximately 4 to 6 grants ranging in size from approximately \$50,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. Proposals in which the applicant is requesting assistance funds in excess of \$100,000 will not be reviewed. If costs are incurred before the award, they are incurred at the grantee’s own risk.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement without further competition (after the original award selections are made) if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions. The additional selections must be made in accordance with the terms of this announcement and EPA policy.

Funding for these projects is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process. Award of funding through this year’s competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

Proposals to supplement existing projects are eligible to compete with proposals for new awards.

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement or make fewer awards than anticipated.

B. Start Date/Project Duration

All projects should have an anticipated start date of **October 1, 2007**. Proposed project periods may be up to two (2) years.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

States, U.S. territories or possessions, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments and intertribal consortia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public and private non-profit institutions, and individuals are eligible to apply for funding. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1955 are not eligible to apply.

Matching funds are not required.

B. Threshold Eligibility

In order to be eligible for funding consideration under this announcement, proposals must meet all of the following conditions:

1. Proposals cannot exceed \$100,000. Proposals that request more than \$100,000 will not be considered for funding.
3. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
4. Proposals must be received by EPA or through grants.gov by the solicitation closing time and date published in Section IV of this announcement. Proposals received after the published closing time and date will be returned to the sender without further consideration.
5. All projects must occur within one or more of the states of EPA Region 9 (Hawaii, Nevada, Arizona, California), Tribal Nations in Region 9, or the Pacific Trust Islands including the U.S. flag areas of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam, and the freely associated states of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federal States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.
6. The SAI/ FQPA grant program is intended to support demonstration projects, education and outreach projects, studies, and investigations. Proposals seeking funding for basic research

are not eligible for funding. However, proposals may include a *component for applied on farm research*, as long as they also have *demonstration, education and/or outreach activities*.

7. Proposals seeking funding for demonstration projects must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration and is not eligible for funding under this RFP.
8. Proposals from different principle investigators within an organization will be accepted. However, principle investigators may not submit more than one proposal.

Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will not be considered for funding and will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Format and Content of Proposals

Proposals must be typewritten, in 12 point print using 8.5 x 11 inch paper with minimum one inch horizontal and vertical margins. Proposals, containing the information described in 1 below, are limited to 16 pages excluding appendices- excess pages will not be reviewed. Proposals must address all of the requested information below, and be received by EPA or through grants.gov by 5:00 PM Pacific Standard Time on March 19, 2007. Pages should be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the appendices. Full application packages need not be submitted at this time. Proposals must address each of the Evaluation Criteria in Section V of this announcement and follow the format and content outlined below. It is recommended that confidential information not be included in the proposals.

1. Proposal Content:

a. Cover Page:

The cover page should list the following information with your letterhead:

Project Title:
Project Coordinator:
Organization Name and Address:
Telephone No.: Fax No.: Email Address:
Project Duration (including Starting Date and Ending Date):
First Year Funding Request:
Second Year Funding Request, if applicable:
Total Funding Request (for the entire project):

Please indicate if this proposal is a continuation of a previously EPA funded project.

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please provide the following:

EPA Assistance Number: _____

Budget Period of Project: _____

b. **Budget/Resources:**

Please submit a detailed budget with your proposal, linking the cost of each objective with the budget. Include information on other funding sources, if any.

c. **Table of Contents:**

Self explanatory.

d. **Executive Summary:**

The Executive Summary should be a stand alone document (recommended **not to exceed one (1) page**), containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary should identify the **measurable environmental results** you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits. (See Section I. for more information about environmental results)

e. **Proposal Narrative:**

Applicants must make sure that the proposal narrative addresses the ranking criteria in Section V of this announcement:

Part I: Project Title. Self explanatory.

Part II: Objectives. Include a numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives. In most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.

Part III: Justification. For each objective list in Part II above, discuss the potential outcome in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. If appropriate, the target pest(s) and crop(s) should be explicitly stated. This section should be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective.

Part IV: Literature Review. Briefly describe relevant information currently available. This should also include information on projects currently in progress that are relevant to or provide the basis for either the experiment design or the validation of a new approach to pest management.

Part V: Approach and Methods. Describe in detail how the program will be carried out. Describe how the system or approach will support the program goals. Include a well conceived work plan that is realistic and appropriate to achieving the identified objectives. This should include a brief background on the main issues or challenges, specific objectives, main activities and expected outcomes and deliverables. Include the project area.

Part VI: Performance Measures and Expected Outputs and Outcomes.

Please state how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable environmental results. The work plan should include **performance measures** that demonstrate progress or environmental benefits of the project. To do this, you will need to select two or three measures from the SAI Toolbox which can be found at <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai> (SAI Grant Applicants, Performance Measures). If you cannot access these measures on the web, please call Cindy Wire at (415) 947-4242 for a hard copy of the measures.

If you choose to use unique performance measures other than those listed in the Toolbox, they must be clearly described and submitted as part of the proposal. If your project is selected for funding, measures included in your proposal may be subject to negotiation.

Include a clear explanation of your plan and the methods (both quantitative and qualitative) that will be used for tracking and measuring environmental results. Measures of success should be linked to reduction of pesticide use/risks, implementation of alternative agricultural practices, and/or similar impacts.

In addition, all **projects must include the following reporting elements:**

- ☞ Number of acres likely to be impacted by the project.
- ☞ Current level of pest management and the level that is expected to be achieved at the end of the project based on the SAI Transition Index. See <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai> (SAI Grant Applicants). If you cannot access the web, please call Cindy Wire at (415) 947-4242 for a hard copy.
- ☞ Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected of the targeted high risk pesticide active ingredients and/or pesticide products.

2. **Proposal Appendices:** These appendices must be included in the grant proposal but are not included in the 16 page limit. Continue page numbering as appropriate.
 - a. **Appendix A. Literature Cited.** List cited key literature references alphabetically by author.
 - b. **Appendix B. Timetable.** A timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.
 - c. **Appendix C. Environmental Results Past Performance:** Submit a list of EPA and other Federal agency assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the

expected results under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate how you adequately documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider other relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant).

- d. **Appendix D. Programmatic Capability:** Submit a list of federally funded projects similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 and preferably EPA agreements). Describe (i) how you were technically able to successfully carry out the proposed projects; (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under these agreements and submitting acceptable final technical reports under them.

In addition, describe your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

B. Submission Method

Please note that you may choose to apply in one of two ways. If you wish to apply with a hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under “Hard Copy Submission” below. If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, please follow the instructions under “Electronic Submission” below. Please only use one form of submission.

EPA will not accept proposals which are sent via FAX transmittal or which are sent via electronic mail.

1. Hard Copy Submission

If you are applying via the hard copy method, one original hard paper copy and one electronic copy are required. The electronic copy should be submitted on a CD or a 3.5” disk, IBM compatible, and readable in PDF, MS Word for Windows to the address indicated below.

All hard copy proposals must be sent to:

Cindy Wire, Agriculture Program
Communities and Ecosystems Division
Environmental Protection Agency – Region 9
75 Hawthorne St., CED-1
San Francisco, CA 94105

2. Electronic Submission

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package and instructions for applying under this announcement using grants.gov. You may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R9-CED1-07-001, or the CFDA number (CFDA 66.716), in the space provided. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to go to EPA opportunities).

Proposal materials submitted through grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

Please be sure to view the additional instructions for applying electronically under this announcement in Appendix A, or by downloading additional instructions on Grants.gov.

If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>, and copy wire.cindy@epa.gov.

C. Submission Dates

Proposals must be received by EPA or through grants.gov by 5:00 PM Pacific Standard Time on **March 19, 2007**. Late proposals will **not** be considered for funding.

D. Confidential Business Information

It is recommended that confidential information not be included in the proposal. However, in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. If confidential business information is included, EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Pursuant to 40 CFR 2.203, applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c) (2) prior to disclosure.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants (except for Indian Tribes and Tribal Consortia) must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Executive Order 12372 or Section 204 of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

F. Pre-proposal/Application Communications and Assistance

EPA Region 9 will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. However, in accordance with EPA's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications.

G. DUNS

All applicants applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. Applicants that do not already have a DUNS number may find instructions for obtaining one at the following website:

<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>. A DUNS number may also be obtained by calling 1-866-705-5711.

V. Application Review Information

A. Proposal Review

All proposals will be reviewed for threshold eligibility by the Region 9 Strategic Agricultural Initiative Coordinator. Each proposal that meets threshold eligibility requirements will then be evaluated by a panel of EPA staff based on the criteria set forth below. In your proposal, please make sure that you address each criterion.

B. Selection Criteria (Total 100 points)

1. *Extent to which the proposed project focuses on sustainable agriculture and uses conservation planning and a whole systems approach.* Proposals will be evaluated based on: (i) The projects approach to methods for grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices, along with applied research and extension program components, and; (ii) The extent that a "whole systems" approach to pest management is encouraged. The project should strive to integrate pest, soil, crop, and water management practices. **(10 points)**
2. *Importance of project in relation to FQPA.* Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent that they address critical pest management issues relative to the Food Quality

Protection Act (FQPA) and are consistent with the goals of the FQPA Strategic Agricultural Initiative. (See Section I for goals) Projects must focus on actual results, getting information and agricultural practices into the hands of growers who actually use them to shift away from FQPA-targeted pesticides to other methods of pest management. **(10 points)**

3. Commodity and region-wide significance and degree of transferability to other areas. Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent they address agricultural commodity pest problems, discuss and explain the importance of the project and the commodity. In addition, the proposal should address how the agricultural practice and reduced-risk tools could be adapted to other locations with similar cropping systems. **(10 points)**
4. Extent to which the project has on-farm demonstration with active roles for multiple grower participation. Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent of their partnerships and the participation of growers as part of the project activities. Cooperation with scientists, extension officers, pest control advisors, crop consultants other non-profit organizations, and other partners is encouraged. Letters of support from collaborators, indicating their contributions to the project, may be provided for this factor. **(10 points)**
5. Extent to which the project has clearly stated objectives. Proposals will be evaluated based on their clarity and ability to explain the project objectives and the degree to which the proposed project will: (i) Reduce or eliminate the use of highly toxic pesticides; and (ii) Increase farmers' adoption of reduced risk alternatives and/or sustainable integrated pest or crop management methods. **(10 points)**
6. Extent to which the project has environmental measurement/outputs and outcomes. Projects will be evaluated on their plan for tracking and measuring environmental results. Proposals will be scored on the performance measures selected and the supporting data that will be used to track the selected performance measures as described in Section IV.

In addition, **all projects must include the following** reporting elements:

- i. Number of acres likely to be impacted by the project;
 - ii. Current level of pest management and the level that is expected to be achieved at the end of the project based on the SAI Transition Index <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/> (SAI Grant Applicants);
 - iii. Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected of the targeted high risk pesticide active ingredients and/or pesticide products.
7. Outreach/Use of extension to enhance the likelihood of grower adoption. Proposals will be evaluated to the extent that there are clear plans for extension; outreach or communications that will likely lead to effective learning and adoption of new practices, and how the long term, sustainable adoption will be measured. **(10 points)**
 8. Extent to which the programmatic capability (technical experience)/ qualification and experience of the applicant is demonstrated relative to the proposed project and

involvement of key institutions and stakeholders. Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's:

- (i) past performance in successfully completing federally funded projects similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project within the last three years;
- (ii) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current federal agency assistance agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project within the last three years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under the agreements;
- (iii) past performance in documenting and/or reporting on its progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (e.g., results) under federally funded assistance agreements performed within the last three years and if such progress was not made whether the documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explained why not);
- (iv) organizational experience and ability to plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project; and
- (v) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider information provided by the applicant and may also consider information from other sources including prior grantors and agency files. Applicants with no relevant or available past performance and/or reporting history (items i, ii, and iii above) will receive a neutral score for those elements of this factor. **(10 points)**

9. Extent to which the project utilizes additional funding sources and partnerships.

Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate (i) how they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will compliment activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. **(10 points)**

Final funding decisions will be made by the EPA Region 9 FQPA Selection Committee based on the results of the proposal evaluation and reviewers recommendations. In addition, in making the final funding decisions, the Region 9 FQPA Selection Committee may also consider program balance, available funds, and geographic diversity.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Decisions and Formal Application Process

Once proposals have been reviewed, evaluated and ranked, applicants will be notified via U.S. Mail regarding the outcome of the competition. The notification is not an authorization to begin performance on the selected project(s).

In order to receive EPA funds, selected applicants must submit a complete grant application which includes a detailed work plan and budget approved by EPA. A notification containing financial and administrative, and general information on Federal grants will be mailed to the

selected applicants. Blank application forms may also be obtained at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/funding/applying.html>

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The award and administration of these grants will be governed by the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements set forth at 40 CFR Part 30 or 31. In addition, the provision in 40 CFR Part 32 governing government-wide debarment and suspension, and the provisions in 40 CFR Part 34 regarding restrictions on lobbying applies.

Once a proposal is selected, the recipient may be required to submit before award, in addition to a full application, a copy of its written procurement procedures developed in accordance with 40 CFR 30.40 – 30.48 or 40 CFR 31.36, as applicable, for review.

All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under the applicable OMB Cost Circulars. Copies of the circulars can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>. In accordance with the EPA policy and the OMB circular, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for fund-raising, or political activities such as lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts. EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other Federal grants, or intervention in Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, Federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal government or any other government entity. Cost rates will not increase the \$100,000 maximum funding amount.

In certain circumstances costs incurred prior to the grant award may be eligible for reimbursement. However, this does not include any costs associated with responding to this solicitation or in finalizing the application package. If costs are incurred before the award, they are incurred at the applicant's or grantee's own risk.

Nonprofit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement may be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8, 'EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards' which can be found at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf. Nonprofit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capability Form, with supporting documents, contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

In accordance with 40 CFR 30.54 and 31.45, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data are required to submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). This includes efficacy and performance data, surveys and similar results. The award recipient must develop and implement quality assurance and quality control procedures, specifications and documentation that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet project objectives. The QAPP is the document that provides comprehensive details about the quality assurance/quality control requirements and technical activities that must be implemented to

ensure that project objectives are met. The QAPP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-5: EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans. The QAPP must be submitted to the EPA Project Officer at least 30 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation. Requirements for QAPP's can found at http://www.epa.gov/quality1/qa_docs.html.

If a conference or workshop is an element of the project, the applicant will be required to answer the following questions: Who is initiating the conference/workshop/meeting? How will it be advertised? Whose logo will be on the agenda and materials? What is the percentage of participants, i.e. federal, state, local or public? Will the grant recipient prepare the proceedings and disseminate the information back to the targeted community? Will program income be generated from this event?

If indirect costs are budgeted in the assistance application and the non-profit organization or educational institute does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it agrees to prepare and submit its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with the appropriate Federal cost principle, OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" or OMB Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" within ninety (90) from the effective date of the award for this assistance agreement.

If a local government does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." The local government recipient whose cognizant Federal agency has been designated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) must develop and submit its indirect cost rate proposal for approval to its cognizant Federal agency within six (6) months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year. If the cognizant Federal agency has not been identified by the OMB, the local government recipient must still develop (and when required, submit) its proposal within that period.

A grant recipient must agree to meet all EPA requirements for studies using human subjects prior to implementing any work with these subjects. These requirements are given in 40 C.F.R. 26. For observational studies involving children and/or pregnant women, please refer to Subparts B & D of 40 C.F.R. 26. No work involving human subjects, including recruiting, may be initiated before the EPA has received a copy of the applicant's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval of the project and the EPA has also provided approval. Where human subjects are involved in the research, the recipient must provide evidence of subsequent IRB reviews, including amendments or minor changes of protocol, as part of annual reports. Until further notice, EPA will not consider funding for research that involves intentional dosing human toxicity studies with pesticides.

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the "recipient" even if other eligible applicants are named as "partners" or "co-applicants" or members of a "coalition" or "consortium". The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to acquire services or fund partnerships, provided the recipient follows procurement and subaward or subgrant procedures contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as

applicable. For profit organizations are not eligible for subawards or subgrants under this announcement but may enter into procurement contracts with recipients.

Successful applicants must compete contracts for services and products and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by these regulations. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify contractors or consultants in their proposal. Moreover, the fact that a successful applicant has named a specific contractor or consultant in the proposal EPA approves does not relieve it of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements.

Subgrants or subawards may be used to fund partnerships with non profit organizations and governmental entities. Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products to carry out its cooperative agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of “subaward” at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or “subgrant” at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions.

C. Reporting

The successful applicant(s) will be required to submit a progress report six months after the beginning of the project, and then additional progress reports annually throughout the duration of the project. Reports should include a description of project activities including accomplishments, successes and lessons learned along with any problems and/or delays. Environmental outcomes should be indicated in relation to the approved schedule and milestones. Annual Financial Status Reports (FSR’s) will also be required. A final project report is also required 90 days following the end of the project period according to the same format. All reports can be submitted either electronically or by hard paper copy.

D. Dispute Resolution Process

Grant competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the contact listed in Section VII.

VII. Agency Contacts

If you have questions or need additional information regarding the Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act Grant Program: FY 2007 Request for Proposals, please contact:

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